



- 1 -

SOCI 2911 - 2015

## Social Research Traditions (SOCI 2911)

Instructor: Kevin Willison, Ph.D.

Lakehead University (Orillia Campus, 500 University Avenue)

Class Room: OA 2015

2:30 – 4:00 PM

Wed. & Fridays

**SOCI 2911 - FAO**

**Office Hours:** by appointment: [kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca)

TERM/YEAR: Fall 2015

HOURS PER WEEK:

3

LEVEL:

Undergraduate (Year 2)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** A brief introduction to doing social research. This second year university-level course covers a broad range of topics, including a look at human ethics, survey design, measurement issues, quantitative and qualitative methods, etc. A variety of learning and evaluation strategies are deployed.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:** Social Research Methods: Third Canadian Edition

Oxford University Press: Alan Bryman, Edward Bell and James J. Teevan 2012. ISBN: 978019-5442960

### **SYLLABUS OVERVIEW - (September 2015 – Dec 2015) [ Most materials are posted on “Desire2Learn” ]**

- Posted material on Desire2Learn is testable data. Exception: “supplemental material.” Lecture notes and required text readings are also testable material. Attendance to all classes is strongly recommended.
- This can be a challenging course. For every one hour of class time two (or more) hours of independent study is highly recommended (1:2 ratio).

### Sample Course Content

<p><b>Week 1</b></p> <p><b>Text Reading: Chapter 1</b></p>	<p><b>General Research Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theory and Research</li><li>• Deductive and Inductive Approaches</li><li>• Epistemological Considerations</li><li>• Positivism</li><li>• Interpretivism</li><li>• Ontological Considerations</li><li>• General Orientations: Quantitative and Qualitative Research</li><li>• Influences on the Conduct of Social Research.</li><li>• Added: general ethical principles (TCPS).</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b></p> <p><b>Text Reading: Chapter 2</b></p>	<p><b>Research Designs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criteria for Evaluating Social Research</li><li>• Research Designs</li><li>• Bringing Research Orientation and Design Together</li></ul>
<p><b>Week 3</b></p> <p><b>Text Reading: Chapter 3</b></p>	<p><b>The Nature of Quantitative Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Main Steps in Quantitative Research</li><li>• Concepts and Their Measurement</li><li>• Reliability and Measurement Validity</li><li>• Reflections on Reliability and Validity</li><li>• The Main Goals of Quantitative Researchers</li><li>• Critiques of Quantitative Research</li><li>• Is it Always Like This? Reality and</li></ul>

	Practice.
<b><u>Week 4</u></b>	<b>Survey Research: Structured Interviewing and Questionnaires</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Structured Interview</li> <li>• Reducing Error Due to Interviewer</li> <li>• Variability</li> <li>• Accuracy and Ease of Data Processing</li> <li>• Dealing with Interviewer Effects</li> <li>• Interview Contexts</li> <li>• Conducting interviews</li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>(a) Respondent Problems</li> <li>(b) The Feminist Critique.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Week 5</u></b>	<b>Structured Observation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems with Survey Research</li> <li>• So Why Not Just Observe Behavior Directly?</li> <li>• The Observation Schedule</li> <li>• Strategies for Observing Behavior</li> <li>• Issues of Reliability and Validity</li> <li>• Field Experiments as a Form of Structured Observation</li> <li>• Criticisms of Structured Observation</li> </ul>
<b><u>Week 6</u></b>	<b>Other Sources of Data</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Documents</li> <li>• Government Documents</li> <li>• Official Documents from Private Sources</li> <li>• Mass Media Outputs</li> <li>• Virtual Outputs and the Internet as Objects of Analysis</li> <li>• Introduction to Secondary Analysis</li> <li>• Official Statistics</li> <li>• Official Statistics as an Unobtrusive Measure.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Week 7</u></b>	<b>The Nature of Qualitative Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Main Steps in Qualitative Research</li> <li>• Theory and Concepts in Qualitative Research</li> <li>• Reliability and Validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Main Goals of Qualitative Researchers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Critiques of Qualitative Research</li> <li>• Some Contrasts Between Quantitative and Qualitative Research.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Week 8</u></b>	<b>Ethnography and Participant Observation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to ethnography.</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Roles for Ethnographers</li> <li>• Field Notes</li> <li>• The Rise of Visual Ethnography.</li> </ul>

<b><u>Week 9</u></b>  <b>Text Reading: Chapter 10</b>	<b>Interviewing in Qualitative Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Differences Between Structured and Qualitative Research Interviews</li><li>• Unstructured and Semi-structured Interviewing</li><li>• Focus Groups: An introduction</li><li>• Conducting Focus Groups</li><li>• Size of Groups and Selecting Participants</li><li>• Group Interaction in Focus Group Sessions</li><li>• Limitations of Focus Groups</li><li>• Online interviews and Focus Groups</li></ul>
<b><u>Week 10</u></b>  <b>Text Reading: Chapter 13</b>	<b>Quantitative Data Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Small Research Project</li><li>• Types of Variables</li><li>• Univariate Analysis</li><li>• More Univariate Analysis</li><li>• Bivariate Analysis</li><li>• Kendall's Tau-b</li><li>• Comparing Means and Eta</li><li>• Amount of Explained Variance</li><li>• Statistical Significance and Inferential Statistics</li><li>• Multivariate Analysis.</li></ul>
<b><u>Week 11</u></b>  <b>Text Reading: Chapters 14 and 16</b>	<b>Qualitative Data Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General Strategies of Qualitative Data Analysis</li><li>• Basic Operations in Qualitative Data Analysis Coding</li><li>• Qualitative Content Analysis</li><li>• Readers and Audiences - Active or Passive?</li><li>• Two Approaches to the Study of Language</li><li>• Conversation Analysis</li><li>• Discourse Analysis</li><li>• Advantages of Content Analysis</li><li>• Disadvantages of Content Analysis.</li></ul>

**Week 12****Text Reading: Chapter 18****Conducting a Research Project**

- Know What is Expected by your Institution
- Using a Supervisor
- Managing Time and Resources: Start Thinking Early about the Research Area
- Searching the Existing Literature
- Preparing for Research
- Doing Research and Analyzing Results
- Writing up Research.

***Course Evaluation:***

(Sept. – Dec. 2015)	Grading:	DUE
On-Line: Course on Research Ethics (CORE)	5 percent	* Sept. 25
Test One	15 percent	* Sept. 25
Test Two	15 percent	Oct. 16
Test Three	15 percent	Nov. 06
Research Abstract - Writing Assignment	5 percent	Nov. 20
Test Four	15 percent	Nov. 27
Dec. 2014 Exam (date/time set by Registrar)	30 percent	TBD
Total:	100 %	100 %

**TBD** = To Be Determined (scheduled by Registrar).

**Tutorial for the Tricouncil Policy (Value = 5 %)****Target Competency**

Explain relevant ethical issues that affect social science research.

**Directions**

COMPLETE the Tricouncil Online Tutorial - Course on Research Ethics (CORE) - with Human Participants (TCPS-2).

This consists of eight modules focusing on the guidance in TCPS 2 (Tri-Council Policy Statement) that is applicable to all research regardless of discipline or methodology.

To access, go to: <http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

SUBMIT a copy of your completed certificate to the Instructor, in class. Please do not e-mail.

\* Consider adding this to your resume.

**Academic Integrity:** Cheating during a test or exam is not acceptable. Doing so may lead to failure in the test, exam or course. Refer to your on-line academic calendar for specific Lakehead University rules and regulations pertaining to this. <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/>

The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced.

A copy of the "Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures" including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.

(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

Note: "Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:

1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or end noting.

2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or end noting is given.

3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or end noting is given.

A listing of University Regulations can be found at:

<http://calendar.lakeheadu.ca/current/contents/regulations/univregsintro.html>

The code of student behavior and disciplinary procedures can be found at:

<http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/policy.php?pid=60>

### **Emergency? Know the Number to Call**

Lakehead Security reminds everyone to **call 3911** (Orillia) if you require emergency service. Paramedics, firefighters and police officers do not always know where to find certain buildings or locations on our campuses. By calling 3911 (Orillia), Lakehead Security will quickly dispatch a security guard to your location and contact 911 services. Lakehead Security will then meet and escort emergency services to your location to save valuable time.

### **Regarding E-mail and Accessing “Desire2Learn”**

Should IT related problems arise please contact “Help Desk” at **ext. 7777** (on campus) – or tel. 705-330-4008 (then the extension). Help Desk will assist you with your specific IT issues / concerns.

**NOTE:** All e-mail communication sent from students to the instructor for this class must originate from the student's own Lakehead University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a Lakehead account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

General E-mail Guidelines:

[1] Within all e-mail correspondence (not just for this course) it is advisable to follow “the ten commandments of e-mail netiquette.” See <http://www.studygs.net/netiquette.htm>

[2] Please use your Lakehead University e-mail account (as other e-mail accounts may be treated as spam).

[3] Please be sure to identify yourself in your e-mail (not only your name but also what course you are in, as your Instructor teaches more than one course).

[4] The course instructor may be reached at: [kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca). I will do my best to respond to your e-mail within 12 hours of receipt. Please do not expect an immediate response as I only check my e-mails once or twice daily (due to my teaching and research activities).

[5] Please be advised that you will likely *not* get a response e-mailing the Instructor the night /day before a test or exam. Please plan ahead.

[6] Your grades/marks will not be discussed over the internet / e-mail. Please talk to me in person on such matters.

[7] Please refrain from sending e-mails / texting during class time. Not only is it best to focus on the course material during class, texting may also bother others around you.

**For Students with Disabilities:** Lakehead University offers appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please discuss this with me in person within the first 2-3 weeks of classes. Note: Kevin Willison has specialized AODA training to assist you.

**Missed Tests and/or Exams:**

Make-up examinations will only be given with written documentation from a healthcare practitioner using the official Student Health Certificate, available at:

<http://registrar.lakeheadu.ca/uploads/docs/F.HealthCertificate.pdf> .

**Religious Observance Policy:** If you require religious accommodation(s), you must make your request to the instructor preferably within the first two weeks of class.

**Special Needs:** Dr. Willison has received specialized training in AODA (the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Training Act). As there may be a need to provide information in accessible formats to persons with disabilities, students with special needs who require accommodations should speak with their Instructor privately at the very start of the course. Appropriate documentation must be provided to Student Services. If needed, refer to <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/> for further information.

**Course Concerns?** Students are asked to speak with their Instructor should there be a problem or concern regarding the course which you feel needs to be raised. Once every 3-4 weeks you will have opportunity to evaluate the course and the instructor to provide constructive feedback.

**The University Calendar:** <http://mycoursecalendar.lakeheadu.ca/>

- University Regulations, program & course information, academic session dates etc.

**Lakehead University Policies:** <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/>

- student code of conduct, test and examination policies, grades, and much more

**Weather:** The Weather Network is a good site: <http://www.theweathernetwork.com/weather/caon0506>

- Refer to the Lakehead University (Orillia) home page website to check for class cancellations.  
See: <http://www.lakeheadu.ca/>